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Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP79R00961A001100080003-5
GUIDED MISSILE AND ASTRONAUTICS INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

11 August 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of National Estimates

SUBJECT : NIE 13-60: COMMUNIST CHINA

Forwarded herewith is the GMAIC contribution to NIE 13-60
approved 10 August 1960.

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Chairman

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GMAIC CONTRIBUTION

TO

NIE 13-60

COMMUNIST CHINA

1. Communist China's scientific, technical and industrial capabilities are very limited. However, an intensive program is being conducted to improve this situation. This program to improve Chinese scientific status is directed to the fundamental disciplines of science such as applied mathematics, mechanics, thermodynamics, electronics, chemistry, etc., which have basic application to the missile/space problem. There is evidence of a growing awareness within Chinese scientific and military circles of the importance of guided missiles in modern warfare, and it can be assumed that some basic scientific effort in China today is directed toward an ultimate native missile capability. There are several outstanding Chinese Communists scientists, some of whom are U.S. trained in missile technology and/or related fields,

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actively engaged in basic research related to guided missiles /
astronautics.

2. A broad industrial base is a fundamental requirement in the achievement of any significant guided missile/astronautic capability. Chinese efforts in this direction have been well publicised and it is known that considerable Soviet economic and technical assistance is being given by the USSR to assist in the Chinese industrial growth program but as of now, China is not believed to have an adequate economic/ industrial capability upon which an early missile capability could be based.

3. A third requirement for a significant native guided missile capability is the associated ability to provide nuclear warheads for missiles. Previous estimates (NIE 100-4-60) credit China with a capability to detonate a first nuclear device by 1964 and a fission weapon by 1966. Missile warhead configurations would not be feasible until several years later.

4. In consideration of the basic requirements above; the necessary high degree of integration of these factors; the broad technical/industrial base required to support a native guided missile effort; and the complete lack of intelligence indicating any integration of these requirements toward a guided missile capability; we believe the Chinese Communists are not

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yet ready to engage in the design, test or production of any type of guided missile. Even if initiated now (1960), it would require about 10 years for the Chinese Communists to acquire a significant native guided missile capability.

5. The Chinese Communists are, however, believed to be capable of developing and producing unguided rockets for use with non-nuclear warheads by 1965. Such an endeavor is probable, in order to provide the means for delivering large HE warheads at ranges in excess of conventional artillery, as well as for propaganda purposes.

6. Despite the growing Chinese Communist capability to produce military equipment, they will continue to rely on the USSR for the supply of advanced types of military equipment. This may include obsolescent Soviet air defense missiles in small quantities. However, the Soviets will almost certainly hesitate to provide the Chinese Communists with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles. Soviet reluctance, which probably has already caused some friction in Sino-Soviet relations, stems from the belief that a nuclear missile capability would undesirably enhance Communist China's status within the Bloc and from the fear that, with such weapons, China might take unnecessary risks in its policy toward the U.S. Nevertheless, the Soviets probably have promised nuclear

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support to the Chinese Communists, if required, or may be forced for political reasons into such a step. This assistance probably will not come until late in the period and might consist of short-range ballistic missiles, such as the SS-1, SS-2 and SS-3. However, the number of nuclear warheads and missiles provided will be limited and will remain under Soviet custody and control. On the other hand, several hundred 15 and 35 n. m. unguided rockets with an HE capability may be made available to the Chinese Communists in the next several years as second generation systems replace these weapons in the Soviet Army.

7. Communist China has announced its intention to launch an earth satellite, and there are indications that Chinese personnel are studying rocket technology with Soviet assistance. The Chinese would value highly the political and propaganda gains resulting from a launching. Using Soviet equipment, and with Soviet guidance throughout the project, Soviet trained Chinese Communists could probably perform a successful earth satellite launching in about one or two years after initiation of the project. There is as yet, however, no evidence of the initiation of any projects to launch earth satellites from the territory of Communist China. Any launching from Communist China will be the direct result of Soviet participation and the decision to do so would be based on political factors.

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